

# JOSEPH G. BROWN

1854—1927

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BY THE

EDENTON STREET M. E. CHURCH, SOUTH

AND THE

EDENTON STREET SUNDAY SCHOOL

*of* RALEIGH, N. C.

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JOSEPH G. BROWN

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## Foreword

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### HOW THIS BOOK CAME TO BE PUBLISHED

ON SUNDAY, February 6, 1927, Chief Justice W. P. Stacy, in his address to the Baraca-Wesley Class of Edenton Street Sunday School, paid tribute to the life and service of Mr. Joseph G. Brown. A stenographic report of that address was made, so that members of Mr. Brown's family might have an opportunity to read it.

Before many days the suggestion was made that this address be printed, and a committee from the Baraca-Wesley Class was appointed to have this done. But many other tributes were paid Mr. Brown, and the suggestion followed that all such papers in any way coming from Edenton Street Church and Sunday School should be printed in a single volume, and a committee representing the Baraca-Wesley Class, the Sunday School as a whole, and the Board of Stewards for the entire membership of the Church, was appointed.

We have collected these papers in as nearly the form in which they were originally given as possible, and in accordance with our request Reverend W. A. Stanbury has written an Introductory Word, giving the facts of Mr. Brown's life in outline.

To the membership of Edenton Street Church and Sunday School, and to the community in general, we present the results of our effort in the prayer and hope that this volume may serve to fix even more securely the place which the memory of Mr. Brown universally holds among us, and to enforce forever the high principles of Christian manhood and of faith in God and man by which he lived.

DAN W. TERRY, *Chairman*

MISS BLANCHE BARRINGER, *Secretary*

N. C. NEWBOLD

D. M. PENNY

JNO. A. PARK

C. C. CUNNINGHAM

W. G. WOMBLE

*Committee.*



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## *Introductory Word*

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THE PAPERS Printed in this little book are the tributes paid to MR. JOSEPH G. BROWN by members and organizations of Edenton Street Methodist Church, Raleigh, following his death, January 30, 1927. There is included also the address of Dr. W. P. Few, President of Duke University, delivered at the funeral service held in the Church, Monday, January 31, at 4 o'clock. To these have been added a few paragraphs which were printed on the last page of our Sunday Bulletin for February 6, 1927, and an address delivered at a memorial service at Duke University, February 23. It will be recalled in this connection that Mr. Brown was for thirty years a trustee and for ten years President of the Board of Trustees of Duke University. Since these collected papers do not give, because their nature does not allow them, any ordered historical account of Mr. Brown's life, a brief summary of the main facts are set down here.

JOSEPH GILL BROWN was born in Raleigh, November 5, 1854, the son of Henry Jerome and Lydia Lane Brown. He was next to the youngest of a family of fourteen children. His great-grandfather on the maternal side was James Lane, a brother of Joel Lane, the original owner of the site of Raleigh. His mother was born on the farm on which Raleigh now stands.

He received his early education in private school at Lovejoy Academy. In 1871 he entered Trinity College, then located in Randolph County, there coming under the influence of Dr. Braxton Craven, who was president of that institution. He continued here as a student for two years, and in 1873 became connected with the Citizens National Bank of Raleigh. In 1883 he was elected cashier of the bank, and in 1894 became president, continuing in the latter office until his death. He was also at the time of his death president of the Raleigh Savings Bank and Trust Company, the oldest savings bank in North Carolina.

He was identified with public affairs as few men of his generation, serving with distinction in every position for which he was chosen. He was at one time a member of the Board of Aldermen



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## *Introductory Word—Continued*

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of the Capital City, and for twenty-eight years he served as City Treasurer. He served as president of the Raleigh Associated Charities, president of the Raleigh Chamber of Commerce, president of the Raleigh Clearing House Association, and president of the State Bankers' Association. While the Jefferson Standard Life Insurance Company held its main offices in Raleigh he served as president of that organization. He was for nine years a member of the Executive Council of the American Bankers' Association. He served as vice-president, and at the time of his death was president, of the Atlantic Fire Insurance Company. He was a trustee of the Olivia Rainey Library and trustee and treasurer of the Methodist Orphanage. He was director of the Carolina Southern Railway Company, and served as president of the company until the Government took over the railroads in 1917. He was chairman of the State Hospitals Board in charge of the State hospitals for the insane and the Caswell Training School. He was a member of the Columbia group of the Pan-American Financial Conference. He was a member of the Advisory Council of the Federal Reserve System, and during the war was chairman of the local executive committee of the Red Cross and chairman of the State Liberty Loan Committee during all of the five campaigns. He was at one time Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Odd Fellows in this State. He always stood ready to serve, and in many ways, of which the public did not know, did serve, the State of which he was a native and loyal citizen. The present standing of the government of North Carolina in the financial world is perhaps more due to the influence and work of Mr. Brown than to that of any other private citizen.

But there was no other connection which he prized so much as that with his Church. For sixty-five years he was a member of the Sunday School of Edenton Street Church. For fifty-eight years he was a member of the Church, and for fifty years' a steward. For twenty-seven years, and for twenty-three years consecutively, he was superintendent of the Sunday School.



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## *Introductory Word—Concluded*

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His last act upon this earth was to make the announcement of the names of two children who were on that Sunday, January 30, being received as Cradle Roll members of the Sunday School. Immediately after this he was stricken with apoplexy and died the same afternoon at 5 o'clock.

On November 10, 1881, Mr. Brown was married to Miss Alice Burkhead, daughter of Dr. L. S. Burkhead, an honored member of the North Carolina Conference and for four years pastor of Edenton Street Church. Mrs. Brown survives him, as do their four children: Miss Bessie Brown, Mrs. J. K. Doughton, R. A. Brown, and Frank B. Brown. He is also survived by his sister, Miss Janie Brown, who lives with Mrs. Brown.

No attempt has been made in these introductory paragraphs to appraise the life and work of Mr. Brown or to analyze the qualities which combined to produce his greatness. In some measure the papers which follow perform this duty, though none of them, nor all of them together, nor any of the words which have been spoken and written elsewhere, give any adequate account of the nobility or power or loveliness of this Christian gentleman and servant of God.

I rejoice to have been permitted to take part in this labor of love.

W. A. STANBURY.



JOSEPH G. BROWN

FROM THE BULLETIN

*of*

EDENTON STREET METHODIST CHURCH

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 1927



## JOSEPH G. BROWN

FROM THE BULLETIN OF EDENTON STREET METHODIST CHURCH FOR  
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 1927.

The business world thought of him as head of a great banking institution and as trusted adviser for many corporations. The educational world thought of him as the patron of sound learning, and as president of the Board of Trustees of Duke University. Those intimately acquainted with civic affairs thought of him as a public servant, who in quiet and unrewarded ways brought his great ability and wisdom to the aid of those charged with carrying on the State's business. In social circles everywhere he was looked upon as a gentleman of surpassing charm and worth.

But we knew him as a part of the life of Edenton Street Church. For sixty-five years he was a member of the Sunday School. For fifty-eight years he was a member of the Church, and for fifty years a Steward. For twenty-seven years, and for twenty-three years continuously, he was Superintendent of the Sunday School. None of us now living have ever known Edenton Street Church or thought of it without him. He was the living personification, as he was the dominating spirit, of our Sunday School. There is no department or phase of our life as a Church which does not bear the touch and in one way or another express the spirit of his life.

But chiefly we knew him as our friend. Probably he had the greatest capacity for friendship of any man whom most of us have known. He was the valued friend of great and learned men; likewise many in humble, hidden station reckoned him the best friend they had. Men who handled millions listened eagerly to his advice, and followed it. Widows with only a scrap of savings left after expenses of sickness and burial had been paid, found him with time to aid them, cheer them, and arrange for their protection. Boys and girls that wanted an education found him ready to help them with their problem. Children left without father or mother or

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## *Joseph G. Brown*

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home found in him a father who claimed them for his special charge. Two hundred and fifty of them standing at sad attention lined the street as the funeral procession approached the Church. Boys and men that had gone wrong and stumbled in the mire and snares of sin went to him with their discouragement and grief, and found him patient and full of comfort. He was everybody's friend; even those who knew him but slightly felt intuitively that he was their friend. When we brought his body to the Church last Monday afternoon, men and women of the highest station mingled their tears with the tears of people whom life has struck its hardest blows; the great throng had lost a friend.

But he was pre-eminently the friend and companion of young people. For seventy--three years he was young in spirit, open to fresh ideas, in understanding sympathy with the hopes and viewpoint of youth. He gave them the warmth and radiance of his affection; in turn they gave him their confidence and stood ready to follow him anywhere. Countless hundreds of them through the years have felt the sweetness and power of his soul, and have gone out all over the earth to be stronger, better people because they have known him, and to count their fellowship with him as one of their dearest possessions. He never knew a single day of old age; all of life was for him an ascent, never a decline. He was standing at the highest point he had yet reached when he stepped up into the world above but still so near this.

And let it be remembered that his life was saturated with the religion of Jesus Christ. There was no interest or concern that was held apart from the transforming influence of this experience and his tolerant but zealous faith. From crowded days he caught time to cultivate the knowledge of God and fellowship with His Son. It was most real to him, but as far removed from boast or pretending as possible. It was his habit of many years to arrive at the Church some time before the Sunday School hour, and, having said good-morning to any who had come early, to go to his pew in the Church and spend a while in Bible reading and

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## *Joseph G. Brown*

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prayer, in preparation for the worship and service of the day. No week-day was begun or ended without the upward look and moments of communion. He never seemed to lack strength or to suffer confusion.

In the Sunday School building, where he had found his greatest joy in laboring, and where his last act had been to announce the Cradle Roll membership of two newly-born babies, he spent his last conscious moment. Just as the chimes were ringing out their invitation to come and worship, the call came to him. It found him ready. Could he have ordered the manner of his going, it would not have been different.





ADDRESS

*of*

DR. W. P. FEW

PRESIDENT OF DUKE UNIVERSITY

AT THE FUNERAL  
JANUARY 31, 1927



## ADDRESS OF DR. W. P. FEW AT THE FUNERAL

JANUARY 31, 1927.

We are a great host gathered as we are here today for the last time about the body of our dear departed friend. We come from all professions and all ranks of life. We represent many varieties of opinion and experience. But we are all of one mind concerning Mr. Brown. He was one man about whom there can be no serious differences of opinion. We have here, too, a community of feeling. This man's death is the one "touch of nature" that makes akin practically the entire City of Raleigh and a large part of North Carolina.

Why this extraordinary uniformity of opinion and unity of feeling that we see here today? Mr. Brown was a normal man. He had the traits of character that make a universal appeal. We all stand in admiration and reverence before the oneness, the wholeness, the completeness of the man's life and personality and the issues of this harmonious development of the whole man in his activities, his character, and his influence. There were no moral, intellectual, or even physical "insurrections in his kingdom of man." His physical, mental, and spiritual constitution was not a house divided against itself. There was a consolidation of all his resources and a concentration of the last thing that was in him, and all this was always available whenever evoked by the crises of life. Whatever direction he might turn his effort at any given time, he was "all there." He succeeded in many ways, and he achieved success because he himself was success.

In business he was very successful. Equipped as he was, how could it have been otherwise? But even in business he worked not primarily for himself—he worked for others; for depositors, for patrons, for shareholders—for the public. Here was a man who spent a lifetime in business, working through approved business methods and achieving business success; and yet he was always concerned more for others than for himself.

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*Address of Dr. W. P. Few at the Funeral*

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He gave himself unstintedly to public service in the best sense of those words. Throughout a long life he served his neighbors in countless ways, the city of Raleigh where he was born and where he lived all his life. He served the State many years and in many ways. He served important causes of the National Government, especially during the Great War. Indeed, I think he never recovered from the strain of the load he carried in those hard years. All this was done without expectation of reward.

He was preëminently a servant of the causes of education. In 1871 he entered Trinity College, now a part of Duke University. From that day until his death he served the institution through every stage of its development and in every sort of way—as loyal son, as patron, as benefactor, as trustee for thirty-four years, and as President of the Board of Trustees for ten years. He served other institutions. He was educationally minded. He had the spirit of youth and could work at the tasks of education with an understanding heart. He was the kind of man, the only kind of man, that can succeed or even be useful in intimate work with youth. He deserves to live among those who through guidance and inspiration of the young have most effectively served their day and generation.

He had a deep religious nature and experience. Beginning here at this Church in boyhood, out through the State, and everywhere, he devoted his time, his money, himself to the Church, to the orphans, to charities, to all good works, “for the glory of the Creator and the relief of man’s estate.” He was earnest, but never narrow; he had intense convictions, but without a trace of bitterness.

What were the products of all this—of his rich inheritance in a strong body, a good intellect, and right tendencies; of his inner moral adjustment; and of the discipline of years rightly lived? One product was a mind that always ran true to form. He was finely adjusted to life, and this adjustment gave him a sort of moral instinct that carried him to his tasks with something of the inevitableness of the natural instinct that compels the bird to build

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*Address of Dr. W. P. Few at the Funeral*

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its nest and to sing its songs. Thinking back, as I have been thinking for the past twenty-four hours, over many years of intimate association with Mr. Brown and others in tasks and problems that have sometimes been intricate and difficult, I have not been able to recall one instance when it seemed to me that he did not think straight and think through to right conclusions. This sort of intuitive wisdom does not come out of the intellect alone, but out of the full, harmonious development of all a man's capacities and powers. As we all well know, Mr. Brown had in an unusual degree this precious gift of unerring wisdom.

Another product was an all-pervading goodness. He was rightly in tune with the infinite, and it seemed to be more nearly natural for him to do right than for almost any other man I have ever known. He lived here all his life. I dare now to challenge the memory of any of you—and I care not how long you have known him—can you recall many, if any, occasions when you felt that he did wrong?

It has been said that the beautiful is higher than the good because it includes the good—it is the good made perfect. At any rate, Mr. Brown's inner character flowered also in beauty, a beauty that showed itself even in physical excellence. He had a clean and fine face that none but a good and wise man can ever wear. He had a personal charm and winsomeness. I recently heard a little boy say the men he loved most were his father and Mr. Brown. This is typical of the feeling of children, of youth, of adults. None knew him but to love him.

The quiet, useful, and happy life of this man is an unanswerable argument of our Christian religion. That sort of living and witness-bearing on the part of Christians and a new emphasis by all our preachers upon the plain teachings of Jesus and upon Jesus himself as the Way of Life, and the Only Way of Life—these are the things for which this troubled age of ours is impatiently waiting, and these, too, are the things that would bring about the greatest revival of essential Christianity the world has ever seen.

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*Address of Dr. W. P. Few at the Funeral*

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There's the worth of this man's example, and there's the heritage of his life—sweet, abiding, consoling to all who knew him and who know of him in the after-years, to you his neighbors and friends, and above all to you, his sorrowing loved ones. May the blessed memories and the benedictions of his life go with you to the end; and may the richest blessings of his God and Father, and yours and ours, be upon you now and always.

# ADDRESS

*of*

HON. JOSEPHUS DANIELS

AT THE MEMORIAL SERVICE IN EDENTON  
STREET METHODIST CHURCH

FEBRUARY 13, 1927

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[NOTE: On February 13, 1927, a Memorial Service was held at Edenton Street Church. This service was conducted by the pastor of the church, and addresses were delivered by Hon. Josephus Daniels, S. Wade Marr, and W. M. Upchurch, Jr.]





## ADDRESS OF MR. DANIELS AT THE MEMORIAL SERVICE

You cannot think of the Raleigh of yesterday, today, or tomorrow without thinking of Joseph Gill Brown. Before this city was dreamed of, his forebears lived in the primeval forests, cleared the fields, and hunted along the streams hard by the spot where stands today our stately capitol and this and other temples of religion. It was Joel Lane, his mother's great-uncle, who owned the broad acres where in 1770 the first Wake County courthouse was built on the hill across the way from Joel Lane's home. In 1789 the Legislature, tiring of an ambulatory seat of government, directed that "an unalterable seat of government" should be located "as near as possible in the center of the State." On Friday, March 20, 1792, the commissioners bought 1,016 acres of land from Joe Brown's great-uncle, paying therefor \$2,756. He could therefore have said of early Raleigh, "of which I was a part." Is it any wonder that Joe Brown had a passionate love for the very trees and soil of his native city?

It is a matter of history that Willie Jones, friend of Jefferson and friend of Lane, was the dominating leader when Joel Lane's farm was chosen as the site of the State Capital. It is a further matter of history, and may be more than a coincidence in connection with the Church home of Joseph G. Brown, that this same Willie Jones, who procured the purchase of his kinsman's land as the site for the capitol, donated the land upon which this Edenton Street Methodist Church stands. Willie Jones was not a Methodist, not even a professing Christian. It may be—who can tell?—that out of his regard for the Lane family he deeded property to a Church where descendants of this family have worshipped for a hundred years, a Church of which his own daughter was to become a communicant.

We cannot envision the Raleigh of today without thinking of Joseph G. Brown. Material evidences are all about us—this Church and Sunday School room, the buildings and grounds of

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## *Address of Mr. Daniels at the Memorial Service*

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the Methodist Orphanage, his home of comfort and hospitality, the Citizens National Bank, soon to be enlarged upon his plans, are some of his constructive works. More enduring than these are the lives into which he carried hope and light and blessing. It is in the lives he touched that tomorrow, though dead, he will still speak. It is, therefore, true that in its conception, in its development, in its future, Raleigh and Raleigh Methodism will owe a lasting debt to this good man.

It would be a sad privilege if Christian faith, which gives assurance of blessed immortality, did not make it a sacred one, to pay homage to this noble man in this holy place made dear by his devotion. While Mr. Brown moved among us he was called the First Citizen of Raleigh. And so he was.

This city has furnished not a few men of distinction. Can you recall one to the manner born who served his day so well or who gave it more honor than Joseph G. Brown? By the standard of success in business, or in large civic contribution, or in religious activity, or in garnering the love of his fellows, I can recall no man in all its history who outranks him. More learned men there have been, men more eloquent, men with larger possessions. But in the greatness of goodness, in securing and holding public confidence, in recognition abroad as well as at home, as a constructive leader, he was Raleigh's Abou Ben Adhem. And his name led all the rest for a similar reason: he loved his fellowmen.

It is a proud claim that Raleigh moulded him, not alone to serve his own city, but to lead in the State and National gatherings of bankers, Church assemblies, or fiscal affairs of the great Government in the World War. Though he was Raleigh to the core, he was more. He never failed to measure up with the leaders in any assembly of which he was a member.

Joe Brown was the perfection of Raleigh in its best expression. He possessed a rounded character that set him apart in any company. They looked at him twice and saw he was patterned in a lofty mould. Modest and unassuming, he had the merit of conscious power. He incarnated the city's highest ideals and best

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*Address of Mr. Daniels at the Memorial Service*

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traditions. If a stranger had asked you, "Show us the finest fruit of the tree of your city?" the answer would be, Joseph G. Brown.

The deity who presided at his birth showered gifts upon him—beauty of person, charm of manner, graciousness, and the simple dignity that fitted him like a garment. To physical beauty he added the beauty of character, the expression on his countenance of that inward grace which attracted and held old and young. As the crown of his life there was the abiding quality of sweetness and friendliness which were the fruits of the indwelling Spirit of God. The Christian religion as he lived it was joy and peace. It gave serenity and assurance. It accounted for his consistent course. It was his sheet anchor, sure and steadfast. His religion was deep, his experience genuine, deep, clear, and though not given to speaking of it, upon suitable occasions he was not ashamed to give testimony to the faith that was in him.

No written profession of what he believed could add to our confidence in his faith. It is comforting, however, to those who loved him, and will hearten others to know that when he looked Death in the face he could do so unafraid, because his faith never faltered. In the Spring of 1923—on May 23d—following an illness at home, when on a visit to New York, Mr. Brown consulted a specialist, who found his condition serious. He returned to his hotel. Feeling that he stood on the portals of the next world, he made his will and wrote a letter to his beloved wife. The letter was never mailed. It was found last week with his will among his valuable papers. It was the most valuable legacy he bequeathed. There was one sentence in the letter, which comes to us as a message from our dead leader, which at my request I am permitted by his sorrowing wife to read to his friends. "I am not uneasy or worried," he wrote, after telling his wife of the doctor's diagnosis. "If the end comes—as come it must before many years—He will be with me, notwithstanding all my unworthiness. I have implicit faith in Him and in His abounding mercy and love."

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## *Address of Mr. Daniels at the Memorial Service*

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There may be a nobler profession among those handed down to us from the days of saints and martyrs, but I do not recall one. Compared to the possession of that steady faith, made in the hour when he thought Death was near neighbor, what heritage of value would he have left his family, his friends, his Church, his city, his country?

After his religion, which was the mainspring that guided all his actions and which alone explains him, there were two qualities which stood out preëminent. They were Loyalty and Cheerfulness. Loyalty to beliefs, to friends, to duty. He regarded Loyalty as the eleventh commandment. Without Cheerfulness life is a weary grind. Cheerfulness is the twelfth commandment.

In his life there had come attractive offers to Mr. Brown to make his home in cities with larger opportunity to increase his fortune. He talked with me about one which most men in his position would have accepted immediately. His loyalty to the place of his birth forbade serious consideration. He held this loyalty and devotion as something more than houses and lands. Here his ancestors, his kin, had made their homes. His roots were deep. He could not think of uprooting them. It would have cut some ligaments of Loyalty for him to move. There was another attachment. "I could not," he said as we talked it over in Washington, "be happy away from Edenton Street Church and Sunday School." Queen Mary said, "When I am dead, you will find Calais written upon my heart." She did not long more for Calais than Joe Brown for the welfare of his Church.

His loyalty to the financial institutions of which he was the head was marked and unselfish. They had grown from small to large proportions. He was the chief asset of the banks he directed, though he was not the largest stockholder. If he had owned every share of stock in these financial institutions, he could not have shepherded the resources or husbanded them more conscientiously and efficiently. He had gone into the Citizens Bank fresh from college. He had been given marked trust by the chief owner. His loyalty held him to lifelong devotion to the trust reposed in

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## *Address of Mr. Daniels at the Memorial Service*

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him, though he would have become a richer man if all his talents and time had been devoted to a financial institution of his own, which he could easily have established.

His loyalty to his college never weakened. Youth forges strong friendships. Love for the institution that opens doors of knowledge is permanent in fine characters. Joseph G. Brown held unbroken the love of college mates and gained their gratitude by his eminent service as Trustee of Trinity and afterwards as Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Duke University.

High over all was his loyalty to his Church as the temple of the living God. He had no narrow creed and loved all Christians, but his deepest affections were entwined about this Church and Sunday School. Here he had been born into the Kingdom, here his heart had been strangely warmed as he consecrated himself to Christian service. Here had been given vows when he was crowned with the happiness of a happy marriage for love. Here he had brought his children and solemnly dedicated them to God. Here he had rejoiced to see souls born again. Here for more than half a century he had led in everything that looked for the upbuilding of this Zion. Here for over half a century he had been teacher, officer, and superintendent of the great Sunday School which is today impregnated with his spirit. His loyalty made this house to him a very gate of Heaven. To many the very chimes sound mournful now that he is gone.

The virtue of cheerfulness is much underestimated. It is a product of the Beatitudes. It is the oil that gladdens hearts and that prevents creaking in the human machinery. There are cloudy days for many and heartaches and disappointments and disillusionment. They need to feel the warmth of cheerfulness. The only balm to weary hearts is in the Christian religion. The only understanding of the value of that religion to most people is when it is seen in the faces and in the lives of those who profess it. The best sermon is a cheerful and clean life. Joseph G. Brown preached that sermon unconsciously every day of his life, alike to the millionaire and other business men who were associated with

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*Address of Mr. Daniels at the Memorial Service*

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him in business and to the youngest child in this Sunday School. "If religion gives the joy and glow Joe Brown radiates, it is the pearl of great price," was the feeling that brought many to embrace the Christian religion in this Church. How greatly we shall miss his sermons of good cheer! It was given to our friend never to grow old in heart or spirit. He died with the dew of youth on his brow. Perfect health for three score years made his step elastic. His interest in all things never abated. I could not associate him with feebleness or think of his fearing the things that are high.

He died as he would have loved to die, welcoming a little child into his Sunday School, and passing without pain into the rest reserved to the people of God.

It could be truly said of Joseph G. Brown what was said to good Doctor Amboyne, by the young man who was lifted out of despair to hope: "Talking with you is like drinking sunshine."

The Arabian poet described Joe Brown when he wrote:

"Sunshine was he  
In the winter day:  
And in the midsummer  
Coolness and shade."

# ADDRESS

*of*

S. WADE MARR

AT THE MEMORIAL SERVICE IN EDENTON  
STREET METHODIST CHURCH

FEBRUARY 13, 1927







## ADDRESS OF MR. MARR AT THE MEMORIAL SERVICE

If for no other reason than that Joe Brown came and went from this altar, I feel that I stand on sacred ground, and in the spirit of humility and under the consciousness of unworthiness, I put forth a feeble effort to express that which is inexpressible. Here we are, a powerful people, nurtured in a sanctuary crowned with a noble inheritance of Christian fellowship and loyalty; but just now we seem to hesitate. The eyes through which we seemed to glimpse heaven are closed. Till now we little reckoned that the way we have come is the way that Joe Brown, a man of God, has led us. For more than a half century he led because a noble people loved to follow his leadership. In this Church he has left a monument to his leadership. Nothing endures without character. Edenton Street Church and Sunday School shall endure because deeply embedded in the fibre of its character there is a soul—and that soul the spirit of Joe Brown.

God has given to young men few blessings so rich as the privilege of knowing Joe Brown. In seasons of distrust and in periods of doubt, when all the sacred teachings of a Christian home seemed to be quivering on the edge of chaos, and in the struggle of a soul to find itself, it was not at the altar of any great shrine that it knelt; it was not the spiritual leadership of any great minister that it sought; but there was a great beacon, a tower of the Rock of Ages at Edenton Street Sunday School. A plain man of power submerged in meekness and directed by a faith from Galilee. A man powerful in big business, willing to serve. A man, who having merited the faith of his fellowman, stood face to face with countless opportunities to accumulate the things of this world, but with a burning passion for those things which money cannot buy he saw no opportunities of value save in the lives of "the least of these," and to these at Edenton Street Sunday School he showed the way. And to hundreds of young men and women in doubt he has given a new vision of life dominated by a consciousness of

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*Address of Mr. Marr at the Memorial Service*

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the divine. No man could really know Joe Brown and be possessed with doubt. To come under the gentle influence of his serene faith and to catch a glimpse of his understanding ways was to find God.

His contribution to mankind is being measured by the yardstick which he gave. As we think of him and his relations to this community it does seem that towering brick-and-mortar monuments to his business leadership, which was without peer, crumble away in the presence of the veritable thousands who have learned from him the difference in a living and life. Yonder on Fayetteville street is a reminder of his living—here in these walls, which he made sacred for me, is a monument to his life. For nearly thirty years as Superintendent of this Sunday School he has done more to shape the destiny of a Christian people than any man who has passed this way. At the beginning of his life as Sunday School Superintendent this was a comparatively small school made up of young people with only enough older people to provide instruction to youth. But, with a high sense of responsibility toward his task, his personality began to popularize the work of the Sunday School, with the result that this good day has brought us a Sunday School just as attractive to old age as to youth. The bigness of the man came in an infinite capacity to comfort old age and inspire youth. His last official act as Superintendent was Cradle Roll announcements, and nothing seemed so close to his heart as the privilege of adding to the Cradle Roll the names of newly-born babes of parents who years before had joined in the same fashion. Mr. Brown found it easy to love babyhood, and counted it one of his highest privileges to have a part in shaping the lives of little children.

Each succeeding year of his service brought richer fruit, and on the last Sunday of his earthly administration he was fuller of understanding than on the Sunday before. For youth he was an interpreting friend. He, himself, never grew old—ambition to serve was just as keen at the end as it was in the beginning. He thrilled in acts of service to young men and women, in whom he had an abiding faith and of whose problems he had always an immeasurable understanding.

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## *Address of Mr. Marr at the Memorial Service*

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In a Sunday School growing under his leadership from a membership of 350 to over 1,700, there are many young people who find joy in service because they found in Mr. Brown a man who, with the accumulated wisdom and prestige of nearly three-quarters of a century, had kept his heart young, and understood. As I think of all these hundreds of young people today assembled in this Sunday School under the strain of an irreparable loss, I can't repress a consoling thought: how much richer in the vital elements of life are they for even a brief moment with him!—their leader, because their friend.

Of course, they are lost in the shadow. I, too, am lost. As sacred as this place may be in memory, yet somehow it's not my place just now. I'm lonesome here. I keep turning to find a face that is pictured in my mind along with that of my own father. But none of us would be worthy of the friendship which he gave if we did not dedicate ourselves to the task of carrying on the work which he distinguished with his loyalty. His place can never be filled, but the light of his character will encourage and the hope of his life will direct.

The quiet of his manner impressed us with the worthiness of a life lived for God and humanity. Never excited by the whims of mankind, he slipped into our lives to reign as an inspiration and leave an influence like a spark of the divine. Loyal in such a quiet fashion that before we knew it his life became a benediction and we loved him—not in a lip service, but in the pulsations of a heart that beat in full appreciation for God's greatest gift to man—a friend.

A day with Joe Brown was a day close to the Maker and Builder of all. I thank God that I was privileged to know him, and when I shall come to "the end of the trail," if I can know that somewhere there is a friend who loves me as I loved him, the end will be sweet, because the way was not in vain.



A TRIBUTE

*to*

MR. BROWN—A FRIEND OF THE  
YOUNG PEOPLE

*By*

W. M. UPCHURCH, JR., AT THE MEMORIAL SERVICE

FEBRUARY 13, 1927



## A TRIBUTE TO MR. BROWN—A FRIEND OF THE YOUNG PEOPLE

For a person ever to be interested in young people, he must be able to get their viewpoint and be able to walk with them in their youthful experiences. Surely there was none that could see with the eyes of youth or walk with the youth of the day, along their pathway of experiences, better than could Mr. Joseph G. Brown.

A Sunday School teacher of girls once remarked to a worker with boys that she wished that the superintendent of her department would move a class of boys that had been near her.

“Those mean boys worry me almost beyond expression!” she said.

The other worker turned and replied, “‘Mean boys’? Why, there never was a mean boy!”

Surely there never was such a boy to Mr. Brown. Oh, yes, there might have been one or two that offered opportunities of service, but as far as being really mean—there were none. Why? Because Mr. Brown was interested in youth; he had the viewpoint of youth, and he understood the problems of youth.

Mr. Brown always saw in young people something that could be used. He was Christlike in many respects. Surely one of the writers of the Gospels might have written a story about him and about his appreciation of the best in people. One is reminded of the story of Zaccheus, who though rich was despised by his fellow-men. He didn’t think that even Jesus would care. But Jesus saw in him something that could be used for the Kingdom of God. And His words, “Zaccheus, come down! I am going to eat dinner with you today,” have been passed on to us as an expression of the true spirit of Jesus—the spirit of seeking out the best in people. Such was the spirit of Mr. Brown. Many a time he was the one that rested a helping hand on a drooped shoulder and with a kind, friendly word put life and hope into one that had fallen and sent him out into a new world of happiness. Countless numbers of boys and girls who, to the average man or woman, were just plain John

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*A Tribute to Mr. Brown by W. M. Upchurch, Jr.*

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and Mary, with little promise or hope, were to Mr. Brown capable of attempting great things for God and of accomplishing great things for God.

There never has been a successful worker with young people who was not enthusiastic—yes, even buoyant. Unless you can laugh with young people, unless you can even joke with them, they will not interest you. Many a man of three score years and ten would have lost his enthusiasm and his eagerness to try new ventures. His smile would have faded, and he would have built around himself an impenetrable shell of gloom. But not so with Mr. Brown. As he neared the end of his path of life his enthusiasm doubled, his eagerness grew beyond all bounds, his face became as a mirror reflecting the happiness, joy, and beauty of a Christian life.

He was the easiest man to get close to that we have ever known. The youngest among us, however radical our ideas and suggestions might have been, were always assured of a patient and interested listener in Mr. Brown. Nor did he stop with listening alone. If there were any virtue in the plan suggested, he was willing to let youth, impetuous as youth sometimes is, launch out and try new ventures.

But far greater than his enthusiasm, or his keen interest in young people, was his devotion to them. He held them close to his heart; he was their friend and they were his.

Some one once asked Mr. Brown, if he were going to make a talk at a certain meeting what would he like best to talk on. His answer was, "I would talk on love." It is easy enough to talk or preach a sermon on love, but few people can live one as did Mr. Brown. His whole life was an evidence of the principles of love and of friendship. There was no horizon to his love. His friendship knew not the bounds of creed or station; but to none did he give so much of his love, devotion, and friendship as did he to youth. In them he saw the fulfillment of his fondest dreams, the living expression of his most cherished ideals. Only he is truly great who, knowing his work cannot much longer be carried on by himself alone, sees in the youth about him the leaders on



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*A Tribute to Mr. Brown by W. M. Upchurch, Jr.*

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whose shoulders he would place the tasks and the opportunities of service that have been his. It was given to Mr. Brown to see into the future and so to prepare for the days to come that the youth, whom he loved and to whom he gave so much of his time and efforts, should carry on the work to which he dedicated the best of his life.

The youth will miss Mr. Brown, but we are comforted when we know that he is sleeping the sleep of peace—"the innocent sleep, sleep that knits up the ravell'd sleeve of care." We shall miss him because he was our friend—and youth esteem and value nothing so much in this world as a real friend. Such a one is, as it were, another self, to whom we impart our most secret thoughts, who partakes of our joy and comforts us in our afflictions. A friend's company is an everlasting pleasure to us, for a friend may well be reckoned as the masterpiece of nature. "Friendship is love without his wings."

Surely the poet must have been looking down through the ages and thinking of our own beloved Mr. Joseph G. Brown when he wrote:

"God never loved me  
In so sweet a way before;  
'Tis only He who can such blessings send,  
And when His love would new expression find,  
He brought thee to me and said,  
'Behold! A friend!'"



# ADDRESS

*of*

JOHN A. PARK

FIRST ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT  
OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

FEBRUARY 13, 1927

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[NOTE: A Memorial Service was held in the Sunday School Sunday, February 13, 1927, at which time the following address was delivered by John A. Park, First Assistant Superintendent.]



## THE FOUR-SQUARE MAN

Although he was a man of diversified activities, the principal points of contact which Joseph G. Brown had with the world were: (1) his home, (2) his business, (3) his community, (4) his religious life.

As a business man accustomed to dealing with big problems and large financial transactions, Mr. Brown himself had no aspirations to become wealthy. His advice on financial and business matters was always considered sound, and his counsel has been sought by many persons of this community.

As a loyal citizen of his State and community, Mr. Brown demonstrated his intense loyalty and patriotism during the war period when our land was torn with stress and strife, giving his time and talents to the raising of enormous funds for war purposes. He served throughout the war period as chairman of the Liberty Loan activities in this State. Practically every civic and philanthropic institution of the city utilized his services at one time or another.

The modest home where his affections toward a loving family centered is not the home of a banker; it is not an example of extravagance; it is a true home where friendship and happiness have always been in evidence.

Here at Edenton Street Sunday School I believe Mr. Brown received his deep inspiration, and it was here that he did the finest constructive service that has probably been done by any one man for this Sunday School.

As active worker, teacher, and superintendent for more than half a century, Mr. Brown's influence, zeal, and accomplishments have placed this institution among the leaders of the entire State. Children who came under Mr. Brown's influence in their early lives, now grown up, are among those to whom his life has been a benediction. Although he was denied the privilege of intensive education, he for a period of ten years presided as head of the board of directors of what is probably destined to be one of the

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## *The Four-Square Man by John A. Park*

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greatest educational institutions on this earth. In Sunday School he was always a teacher and always a student—his youthful spirit never became too old to learn, or to teach.

His last official act, consummated on this spot two weeks ago, indicated his love for the Sunday School and his interest in children; when he concluded an announcement of new members in the Cradle Roll Department, on being asked if he had anything else to say, his reply was, "There is nothing else that I have to say." That closed his long, useful career in a quiet, peaceful way that was typical of the man's entire life.

We are going to miss Joseph G. Brown from this Sunday School. His place will be hard to fill. The heritage which he has passed on to us is an inspiration that will urge us to carry on as he planned in the past.

# ADDRESS

*of*

CHIEF JUSTICE W. P. STACY

BEFORE THE BARACA-WESLEY CLASS

SUNDAY MORNING

FEBRUARY 6, 1927





## ADDRESS OF CHIEF JUSTICE W. P. STACY BEFORE THE BARACA-WESLEY CLASS

(The International Uniform Sunday School Lesson for the day was  
The Parable of the Talents.)

The scene of our lesson is the Mount of Olives. Those present are the disciples and Jesus of Nazareth. St. Matthew records that the disciples came to Him privately. They said to Him (stating it in my own language): "Master, tell us something more about this doctrine of immortality which you have been teaching us. Is it really true that we shall live hereafter? If you are going away (and you say you are), and you expect to return, what sign shall be given to us of your second coming? What token shall we look for which will denote the end of the world?" As was His custom, He answered the disciples in parables, first using the parable of the fig tree and then the parable of the ten virgins, and thirdly, the parable of the talents.

The time is but a short while before His crucifixion. "For the Kingdom of Heaven," He says, "is as a man traveling into a far country" (the word "man" there refers to the Man from Galilee) "who called his own servants and delivered unto them his goods. And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another, one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey.

"Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made them other five talents. And likewise, he that had received two, he also gained other two. But he that had received one, went and digged in the earth, and hid his Lord's money.

"After a long time, the lord of those servants cometh and reckoneth with them."

You remember the remainder of the parable with respect to the servants who had been given the five talents and the two talents, and the encomium, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant"; and also with respect to the one who had been given one talent and

used it not. I should like for us to get the view and the significance of the words uttered. I think I do no violence to the understanding of some when I say that this passage of scripture has been widely misinterpreted. Mind you, He starts out by saying: "The Kingdom of Heaven"—not Heaven, but its kingdom—"is as a man traveling into a far country." (He, Himself, was to take His long journey pretty soon.) And he calls about him his servants and delivers to them certain talents according to their several abilities. And after a long time the lord of those servants cometh and reckoneth with them. You recognize at once that the emphasis here is placed upon the use of the talents, and whether or not the holders of those talents have increased them and added to their worth. You are all familiar, no doubt, with the debate as to whether the Man from Galilee made any contribution to the Kingdom of Heaven by His coming to earth, exercising divinity itself, and then returning. In other words, the debate has been as to whether a man, being divine already, could, by the assumption of human form, add anything to his own divinity.

That question need not trouble us, nor is it difficult of solution. It is not a question of whether He, by assuming finite form, made any contribution to the Kingdom of Heaven, but whether *we* shall make any contribution.

The desire for immortality (and that's the lesson of the talents) is as universal as the race. It furnishes the incentive for every code of morals and the inspiration for every system of religious faith. The Indian longs for his "happy hunting ground"; the orthodox Jew contemplates restful repose upon Abraham's bosom, and the devout Christian, with ears of faith, listens for the plaudit, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant." Without this belief in and desire for immortality men might well question the fruitfulness of the use of the talents which have been given to them. Take away from men their belief in immortality and you have but a sordid purpose, but a material end to be achieved, and a weak will to serve. Indeed, the will to live itself would be greatly lessened. But a man may by his own efforts, and by the manner

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*Address of Chief Justice W. P. Stacy*

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of the use of the talents which have been given to him, determine in a measure the character and the content of his own immortality. The use which he shall make of the talents entrusted to him is the contribution which he shall make to the Kingdom of Righteousness. And above all, no man wants to fail in the responsibility of deserving.

There is a divine purpose running through the lives of men. And of however little moment my existence or my being here may be to others, I can but think that it is in accord with the purpose of the universe, and every man must render in the end an accounting of his stewardship.

To every man upon this earth death comes, soon or late. It is but a part of life itself—it is but a continuation of that which has already begun. The Grim Reaper is no respecter of persons. He calls with equal tread at the cottage gate and the palace door. The high and the low, the young and the old, he visits them all. He presses their eyelids down with dreamless slumber and they sleep with the hush of the generations.

On last Sunday, in this very building, the Messenger of Death summoned our beloved Superintendent from the work he loved the best and decreed for him that his days here should be no more. But our friend is not dead; he is only gone to take his place in the schools above, there to mingle with the spirits of just men, made perfect. As long as the spire of this church shall point upward, and as long as men, women, and children shall attend Edenton Street Sunday School, he will ever live in the hearts of his countrymen, for even in the kingdom of childhood, and with those who would come to this place that they might know something of the teachings of the Master, as he himself glimpsed bits of the truth and transmitted them to his associates and to his students, he was building a monument more lasting than marble and more enduring than bronze.

Raleigh is a better place for his having lived in it. Banking in this community is safer because of the use of his talents in that

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*Address of Chief Justice W. P. Stacy*

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field. Yea, the religious life of this community is richer, and men go about their work, to their places of business, with a feeling of greater security because he labored here.

There was about him the meed of gentleness and the fruit of strength; the courage of the true and the stamina of the great; the heritage of the meek and the harvest of the bold. Truly, a noble soul! Which element predominated we scarcely know. He gave a helping hand to all sorts and conditions of men. And long may it remain in this mixed world a moot question, or at least a point not easy of decision, which is the more beautiful evidence of the Almighty's goodness, the delicate fingers that are formed for sensitiveness and sympathy of touch and made to minister to pain and grief, or the strong masculine hand that the heart teaches, guides, and softens in a moment.

Many of you remember him just two weeks ago standing on this platform, speaking to you, preaching the gospel which he had preached for more than a half century in this building, the gospel of simple, right, and honest dealing. The worth of such a man cannot be measured by any yardstick known to us. Words themselves are but feeble instruments to convey the meaning of a great life—and it is a serious matter when a great life goes out! Some of you know that in the great financial centers of this country, where men deal in large denominations, the opinion and word of Joseph G. Brown were like current coin, because those men had learned to know that whenever he made a statement, it was true; and the credit of the State of North Carolina has been enhanced by his character and integrity. Not only that, but throughout the length and breadth of this commonwealth and beyond its borders, men and women owe their conception of right to his teaching. You approve or condemn the conduct of your neighbor according to your estimate of right, and your neighbor approves or condemns your conduct according to his estimate of right, the correctness of the judgment in each case depending upon the correctness of the standard by which it is made. As thus understood, human judgment imposes an universal obligation. It is as much a duty

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*Address of Chief Justice W. P. Stacy*

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to see that right judgment is rendered to your neighbor as it is to demand it for yourself, and to fail in either is an immoral act.

Our friend was a delightful companion and a man wholly without guile. It was good to be in his presence. There is no wealth comparable to that of loyal comradeship. It is the divine gift that makes the poor man rich, and without which the master of a world would be poor indeed. He believed in a gospel of justice, in a religion of morality, and in the efficacy of instant reliance on a Greater Power. This was the real source of his strength and effectiveness. "No man has earned the right to intellectual ambition who has not learned to lay his course by a star which he has never seen, to dig by a divining rod for springs which he may never reach." Four-square to every wind that blew, he was the soul of honor, high-minded, straightforward, clean-cut, and withal a great-hearted fighter for the right. The lives of many have been enriched by the rare charm of his friendship, and in the hearts of those who knew him best his immortality will abide.

Great is the reward of a life well spent, and its usefulness is not lost in the democracy of death. There is an indescribable essence or something that lives on. It refuses to die in the hour of darkened shades and in the evening of twilight shadows. From the grave, where "Victors' wreaths and monarchs' gems all blend in common dust," it flies away and becomes an asset of priceless measure—the full sheaves of a golden harvest.

Our friend is dead, but the value of his friendship still lives. His lips are voiceless, but his immortality still speaks. His work on earth is done, but the influence of his life lives on.

"Death is the veil which  
Those who live call life;  
They sleep, and it is lifted."

Such is the parable of the talents.



# PRESENTATION

*of*

## MR. BROWN'S PICTURE

ADDRESS MADE BY CALE K. BURGESS

JUNE 19, 1927

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[NOTE: On June 19, 1927, Mr. and Mrs. James E. Thiem and their son, James Thiem, Jr., presented to the Sunday School a finely finished portrait of Mr. Brown. The address of presentation was made by Cale K. Burgess.]





## PRESENTATION OF MR. BROWN'S PICTURE

It is not our purpose on this occasion to attempt any eulogy of our late Superintendent, for he needs no eulogy at our hands. His life and his work in the Edenton Street Sunday School established for him a memorial more lasting than either bronze or granite; he built for himself in the hearts of children a memorial that will neither tarnish with the bronze nor crumble with the granite.

I have been asked to present to this Edenton Street Sunday School a picture of our late Superintendent. The donors of this picture are Mr. and Mrs. James E. Thiem and James Thiem, Jr. Mr. Thiem is one of the nephews of Mr. Brown, and I wish to say for the donors of this picture that it is their hope that it may be a blessing to this Sunday School.

And, as I look upon this picture, placed at the very entrance to this rostrum, there is something in me that tells me that this gift will be of value to this Sunday School. I feel that it will be a source of inspiration to our present Superintendent and to all those who succeed him in official leadership of this School. As our Superintendent stands on this rostrum from Sunday to Sunday endeavoring to lead in our work in this School I feel that it will be an inspiration to him to know that a likeness of his distinguished predecessor is standing immediately to his right ready and anxious to aid and support him on all occasions, watching every movement in which he undertakes to lead this School and forever bidding him Godspeed in every undertaking. It will forever be an inspiration and blessing to our Superintendents to know that the eye of their distinguished predecessor is resting upon them and that his blessings and his benediction will forever follow them.

The presence of this picture within this room will bring even greater blessings to this School. As we assemble in this auditorium from Sunday to Sunday and as we attempt to worship here and carry on the work of this School, we shall be inspired by the presence of this likeness of our beloved leader. When we look into his face we shall be reminded of the faithfulness and the prompt-

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## *Presentation of Mr. Brown's Picture*

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ness with which he came to this House of Worship, and we shall be reminded of the earnestness and the sincerity that characterized his movements among us. We shall be inspired by the knowledge that though he has passed away yet he abides with us, and that as we endeavor to worship at this shrine his spirit will ever hover about us, and support us, and bid us to carry on this splendid work as God would have us do.

And finally, just now, as these children from the Primary and Junior Departments were marching through these aisles and assembling in the crowded spaces in this room this concluding thought impressed itself upon me; there was never a scene so beautiful in the eyes of our late Superintendent and there was never anything that so pleased his soul and brought light to his countenance as to see these little children marching through these aisles from Sunday to Sunday. Their innocent and gleeful presence always seemed to be the sweetest feast to his eyes and his soul. And I know that his likeness abiding here, near the seat that he always occupied, will forever be an inspiration and a blessing to these children and to their children as they march through these aisles through all the years that come. In fact, it seems to me that this room would look strange to these children if they could not see here the face of their beloved Mr. Brown. If he were living this morning, we know where he would be; but somehow I feel this morning that he is still with us and that as he witnesses this occasion it brings joy to his soul to know that one of his nephews has been thoughtful enough to present this gift to this Sunday School and thereby make it possible for us to have with us forever a symbol of his presence among us. I know that it would please him to abide with us and to know that even his likeness is still near this rostrum; and with his own eye he can continue to look into our faces and continue to follow through these aisles the foot steps of these little children whom he loved so dearly. It is the hope and prayer of the donors of this picture that it may forever be an inspiration and a blessing to this Sunday School and to all those who worship at this place.

# ADDRESS

*of*

REV. W. A. STANBURY

AT A MEMORIAL SERVICE HELD IN THE CHAPEL  
AT DUKE UNIVERSITY, DURHAM

FEBRUARY 23, 1927

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[NOTE: At a Memorial Service held in the chapel at Duke University, Durham, February 23, 1927, one of the addresses was delivered by Rev. W. A. Stanbury, pastor of Edenton Street Church. This address follows:]



## A LIFE NOBLY PLANNED

In a little poem written as a tribute to his wife more than a hundred years ago, William Wordsworth said, giving his conception of a perfect woman :

“The reason firm, the temperate will,  
Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill;  
A perfect woman, nobly planned  
To warn, to comfort, and command.”

It has not been our lot to see a man to whom such a description of perfection might have been more fittingly applied than Mr. Joseph G. Brown. His very appearance, his manner, and all his conduct bore witness that he was “nobly planned.” He came into the world with a goodly heritage, which heritage he husbanded and added to for seventy-three years, not wasting even the smallest fraction of it. Strong, far-seeing, skilled in the highest arts of life, he commanded without seeming to do so, and brought comfort and assurance to human souls with no apparent effort. In whatever group he was found, he was easily first. If there was a gathering of bankers—and he was a banker—he was first among them. If he attended a dinner of the Chamber of Commerce, he was easily distinguished above all others present. If he was in a group of educators, while he might not have laid claim to the profound learning and specialization of experts and scientists, in wide understanding of life and in enthusiasm for sound learning and right education he was not excelled by any of them. If he was in a group of religious leaders of his own church or other churches, there was no man who stood above him.

Through nearly twenty years it was my privilege to know him. And from the first to the last, I was impressed with the soundness and balance of the man. There were no shadows or spots of suspicion in him. Through and through he was what a man ought to be. There was nothing to hide, or of which he ever had cause to be ashamed.

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*Address of Rev. W. A. Stanbury*

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To us all it was a constant marvel how finely balanced were all the powers and concerns of his wide-flung life. Most of us are one-sided, lop-sided beings. But he seemed fully rounded on all sides, with nothing left out or dwarfed, so that every element of his being stood in just relation to all the rest, and did not suffer disturbance or confusion, whatever shock might come to him. No one ever saw him in panic or thrown out of plumb. In complete possession of all his splendid powers, he met every new demand with such calm and sureness as were the amazement of those whose souls had not found the secret which he knew. In such poise and with ever-increasing and never-failing vigor, he moved always forward and stood, when the call to depart came, at the highest level of personal majesty and influence that he had yet reached.

If the reason for such soundness and sureness of life be asked, it must be acknowledged that none of us can tell why completely. Invisible forces beyond the reach of this narrow life play their part in ways we cannot measure, to produce such worth and such stuff of life. But let it be remembered that Mr. Brown was a man of ideals. He did not boast of them. He did not even speak of them, unless pressed to do so. But no one who knew him even slightly ever doubted that he kept before him as a goal to be striven towards the highest in thought and character and service. He was one

“Whose high endeavors are an inward light  
That makes the path before him always bright;

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He labors good on good to fix, and owes  
To virtue every triumph that he knows.”

When other men were uncertain and flinched with the temptations of compromise, when they yielded to the subtle bids for profit and advantage, he stood for right. He seemed never to have had to debate the question as between right and wrong, justice and injustice. The process of reasoning as between the two, or as to what was right, seemed to have been carried through long before,

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*Address of Rev. W. A. Stanbury*

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and decision stood ready at the moment. Quite gentle towards those who might differ, he stood erect with a vigorous sense of right, and in defense of right never hesitated to strike such blows as needed to be struck, which blows were all the more telling because they were backed by love. Without anger, without malice, without fear, he knew at once how to be indignant against wrong and how to win to the side of truth those who were mistaken. Men were never offended or affronted by his insistence upon right and justice and the highest; but no man ever doubted that he cherished the loftiest ideals, or that he had the courage to stand unflinchingly for them.

And then he kept all the way through the spirit of youth. The idealism, the hopefulness, and the enthusiasm of youth never departed from him. In the years of life when so many men let down below the level of their early ideals, he held up and held true, refusing to be disillusioned or to grow hard and merely practical. His openness of mind and his freshness of view were written upon his face. Young men and women, who by the thousands passed under his care in Sunday School and in other places, found in him one who understood, who was not impatient with the hot impetuosity of young blood, and who sympathized with youthful hope. Through fifty years they came to him, giving him their closest confidence and asking his advice not as one who stood superior and aloof, but as one of their own company. To the last his mind was awake to fresh ideas and new proposals and friendly to all steps of progress. He was ready for adventure, and while always wise and careful, never went upon the assumption that caution is the better part of valor. Among the last things he did were to plan larger things for the banking business with which he had been connected for more than half a century, to map out new things for his Sunday School and Church to do, and to participate in this great adventure of education here, in which we all hope to have some little part. The last thing he did was to call



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## *Address of Rev. W. A. Stanbury*

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the names of two new-born babies, enrolled that day in the Sunday School of which for sixty-five years he had been a member, and nearly thirty years Superintendent.

Another secret of his power was his capacity for friendship. Those who had but slight acquaintance with him felt intuitively that he was their friend. Those who knew him best looked upon him as their best friend. Over and over again as I have walked the streets of Raleigh since his passing, men who come from all walks of life have said to me, "He was the best friend I ever had." When we gathered at the Church under whose tower he had so long worshipped, old men trembling with age and shaken with grief mingled their tears with the tears of mere boys and girls, because they had lost a friend. Men who handled millions, and women who have known only luxury, sat beside those who have known only poverty and pain, and all mourned together because they had lost a friend. Men have always felt and acknowledged the power of those in whose hearts dwell the elements that make them to be friend to other people. I once heard Mr. Brown referred to as the best beloved man in North Carolina. I think the statement was justified.

Sound and finely balanced, urged on by the highest ideals, seventy-three years old, but always young, broadly gathering into his affections all who wanted a friend, whatever their class, condition, or creed, Mr. Brown kept at the very heart and center of life a simple and mighty faith in God. His religion did not obtrude itself. It rather shone. It did not employ many words, but when words were needed, they were not lacking and were spoken with sincerity. Tolerant, broad-minded, kind to all who differed, he yet knew in Whom he believed and did not doubt. More real to him than the gray walls of the bank where he worked so long, more real to him than the trees of Nash Square under whose branches he went to and fro on his journeys to business and back home, more real to him indeed than the Sunday School where each Sunday morning a thousand pupils looked to him for leadership,



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*Address of Rev. W. A. Stanbury*

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or the Church whose walls he saw rise in early manhood and whose every moment of history he loved—more real than all of these was his religious experience.

As trustful as a child, and as strong as a martyr, he followed implicitly in the steps of Jesus of Nazareth. Four years ago when he thought death was near, he wrote to his wife: "I am not uneasy or worried. If the end comes—as come it must before many years—He will be with me. Notwithstanding all my unworthiness, I have implicit faith in Him and in His abounding mercy and love." I remember saying in a conversation with a friend sixteen years ago, "Mr. Joe Brown is the best argument for the Christian religion I know." I have not had occasion to revise that judgment since. There was no activity or contact in all the varied interests of his life which did not feel and transmit the sweetness and power of this beautiful thing which lived in his heart.

If you could have been a student at old Trinity in 1871, and if you had looked over the roll-books of the old college, you would have found the name of Joseph Gill Brown of Raleigh. It would not have meant much to you then. You would have said, "He is another one who has come to be enrolled in the freshman class." But through the years that name has been gathering influence and beauty in this State and this nation. It was changed by those who knew him and ultimately by everybody to "Joe Brown." And today that name stands as the synonym and summary of what is best in the social, economic, and religious life of this commonwealth, and as the expression in concrete figure of the ideals which we should all like to see this University hold before herself, and perpetuate in the world. To that name wrought into the great spiritual body of this University and of her sons and daughters everywhere, we do honor today. We thank God for the gift of this man to us, and gird ourselves that we may carry on.



# RESOLUTIONS

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[NOTE: These resolutions were adopted by the various organizations and official boards of the Church.]



RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY  
THE BOARD OF STEWARDS

FEBRUARY 8, 1927.

RESOLVED, That the Board of Stewards of Edenton Street Methodist Church record with great sorrow the passing of its fellow member, Joseph Gill Brown, identified with the work of the Church for more than three score years. It grieves with the family in the great loss which has come to them and the Church. A man of unusual physical, mental, and soulful personality; quiet in manner, wise in counsel, faithful to every trust, persevering in good works, he, like St. Paul when he faced the Great Beyond, could say: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness."

Further, that it is peculiarly fitting that this Board, with whom he labored for so many years and to whose work he gave so freely of his substance and counsel, should perpetuate on its record a page to his memory, voicing our great love for him and the inspiration and value he has been to us, the Church, and the State.

Few men possessed such lovable characteristics as were his and rendered such faithful and valuable service to his fellowmen: a man, who in letter and spirit followed in the footsteps of the Man of Galilee. In him the great Christian virtues of Faith, Hope, and Charity took root in boyhood, and grew and flowered in the fulness of their beauty in his manhood.

In his going from our midst there is imposed upon each and every one a greater responsibility, and, to meet it, we hereby reconsecrate and rededicate our lives to greater service in the Master's vineyard in order that there may be no lowering of the high ideals which he held up, not let-up in the forward move of the Church in which he was such an inspiring figure.

No monument of brass or marble or precious stones is needed to perpetuate his memory. Any inscription that may be chiseled on cold marble or stone to portray his many virtues will be but a faint and imperfect reproduction of the epitaph which he himself has already indelibly written on the hearts of all with whom he came in contact—an epitaph written by the finger of God.

C. A. DILLON, *Chairman.*

C. C. CUNNINGHAM, *Secretary.*

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## *Resolutions*

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### RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY FIRST QUARTERLY CONFERENCE

MARCH 8, 1927.

*Whereas* Mr. Joseph G. Brown was for fifty years a member of the Board of Stewards of this Church, and, therefore, a member of this Quarterly Conference; and

*Whereas* he was for approximately the same length of time a member of the Board of Trustees; and

*Whereas* he was for twenty-seven years, and for twenty-three years continuously, Superintendent of this Sunday School; and

*Whereas*, throughout this long period of official relationship to our work, he rendered a service quite unparalleled and beyond all words to define or describe; and

*Whereas*, by his personal qualities of friendship, companionableness, and unselfish love, he endeared himself to our entire community; and

*Whereas* his ripe wisdom, deep devotion, and all other of his unusual powers and qualities were given without stint in the service of this Church and Sunday School: Therefore,

*Be it Resolved*, by this Quarterly Conference:

That in his death, which occurred on January 30, 1927, we have sustained a loss which we cannot put into words; and

That while we are stricken with grief which we are unable to express, we thank God for the gift which He made to us individually and as a Christian community in the life and service of Mr. Brown; and

That we extend assurances of our deep sympathy to all members of his family; and

That we pledge ourselves afresh to the work of this Church which Mr. Brown served so long and devotedly, and, by the help of God, to those spiritual ideals which were so beautiful and so dominating a force in his life.

Signed, and respectfully submitted,

JOHN W. EVANS

W. G. WOMBLE

J. MARTIN FLEMING.

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## *Resolutions*

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### RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY EDENTON STREET METHODIST SUNDAY SCHOOL

FEBRUARY 13, 1927.

(Mr. Josephus Daniels read the following resolutions which were drawn up by a committee composed of Dr. Albert Anderson and Mr. Daniels.)

Not many weeks ago, by official action, Joseph Gill Brown was elected Superintendent of Edenton Street Methodist Sunday School "for life." It was a formal recognition of his long and whole-hearted dedication of himself to the direction of the child life of this Church. It was also an expression of the love that welled up in every heart to our Superintendent and of gratitude for the benediction of fellowship with him.

Joseph G. Brown's connection with this Sunday School was about co-equal with his life. With that quiet humor and sweetness characteristic of him, Mr. Brown once said he was born on Sunday morning about 9 o'clock, hastened to be on time for Sunday School, and had made it a rule ever since never to be late. Certainly there is no member of this Sunday School who can remember when he was not here, giving glad welcome to newcomers and cheerful greeting to old and young, stimulating them to the study of the Word and to making the Bible the light to their pathway. In this more than three score years when he was rarely absent, and never absent when it was possible to be present, he touched the lives of many thousands, young and old. He never touched any life that was not blessed by association with him.

The sorrow of this company of Bible students cannot be assuaged, but if any reflection could lessen the grief it would be that our Superintendent and friend never grew old. The springs of youth and faith were fed from the Source of Strength in his whole life. He was the comrade of those upon whose heads the snow that never melts had fallen, and his cheerfulness gave them a new zest. He was the coworker of those in active life, and his example gave them the enthusiasm of youth. He was the confidant

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## *Resolutions*

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and friend of young people, who obtained strength and faith from him. He was the beloved of little children because he followed the example of his Lord, and found delight in their wonderment and never-ending charm. He was made happier by their simple faith. He was more than the beloved friend and leader of all in this Sunday School: he was in a very real way its founder in its larger life. Half a century ago the Sunday School was called "the nursery of the Church" and attendance was confined to children and a few teachers who shepherded them. Under Mr. Brown's leadership the Sunday School outgrew the Church in membership and became a vital center of religious life.

His organizing talent was scarcely less than his gift of drawing out the love and devotion of his associates. He found this a place of a few consecrated teachers and a few score children. Under his inspiration and guardianship he made it a vital institution of religious instruction and a dynamo of good works. From the cradle roll to the post graduate course, Mr. Brown lifted the Sunday School to the high plane of a teaching body. He deemed knowledge of the Bible the very mudsill of Christianity and civilization. He kept abreast with the best and most modern methods, introduced them here, and gave himself to making them contribute to both the moral and mental fibre of the membership of this School. His guidance in better methods was only excelled by his example of pure living. He preached brief sermons and gave wise admonition and called children by word to the consecration of themselves to the Savior to whom he had early committed himself and all he had or hoped to be; but the sermon that attracted and strengthened and buoyed most was his own beautiful life. Upon his countenance rested the glow of a life unsullied in youth, untainted in manhood, and glorified as he moved toward the sunrise of an assured immortality.

It is the hall-mark of love when a man's name is shortened. In this Sunday School everybody referred to our Superintendent as "Joe Brown" and children called him Mr. "Joe" Brown. He



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## *Resolutions*

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invited by his own abounding fellowship the affection which he irradiated. The abounding love he gave came back to him full, heaped up, and running over.

Young and old instinctively felt that he understood them and their problems. They knew he rejoiced in their joy and sorrowed with them in trouble. More than all, we loved him because he stood among us a loving figure with tenderness and with granite-like strength. He was comfort to the weary, poise to the wavering, support to the weak. He truly "wore the white flower of a blameless life," attesting that he had found the Pearl of Great Price.

If it had been granted to our beloved Superintendent to choose the manner of his passing, no end of earthly pilgrimage could have been more fitting. As he welcomed the entrance of a newborn babe into the Cradle Roll the summons came, for which he was ready. With the trusting faith of a child, he looked for the last time into the loved faces before him in this Sunday School, and, without pain or struggle, entered into the rest prepared for the people of God. His life was a benediction. His death was in keeping with a life hid with Christ in God.

Sorrowing that we shall see his face no more in this hallowed place, the membership of this Sunday School places on record its devout thanksgiving to the Heavenly Father for His gift to this School of this royal Christian leader. His life was a blessing while with us, and will be an inspiration as we endeavor to follow him in faith and works as he followed Jesus Christ.

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## *Resolutions*

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RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY  
THE MOTHERS' DEPARTMENT OF THE  
SUNDAY SCHOOL

His was a glorious and triumphant passing into the Home of the blessed—a passing such as only God's angels can plan.

We cannot estimate our loss. We shall miss his happy face and his cheerful words, but the memory of his sweet spirit of loyalty and unselfishness, of modesty and optimism, will linger with us always as an inspiration and a benediction. He never found evil in anyone; the good alone filled his own soul. We bless the Lord for giving us the privilege of walking with this man of God.

And when his summons came, the good which had radiated so gently from him throughout life awoke a universal chord, and all who knew him in every walk of life knew they loved him. He has left us the priceless heritage of a spotless name.

“Twilight and evening bell,  
And after that the dark,  
And may there be no sadness of farewell  
When I embark;  
For tho' from out our bourne of Time and Place  
The flood may bear me far,  
I hope to see my Pilot face to face  
When I have crossed the bar.”

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## Resolutions

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RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY  
THE WORKERS' COUNCIL OF THE  
SUNDAY SCHOOL

FEBRUARY 14, 1927.

*Whereas*, in the death of our beloved Superintendent, Mr. Joseph G. Brown, who for more than thirty years was our matchless leader and ever willing counsellor; and

*Whereas*, in his death we are deeply grieved and feel a loss that is irreparable; and

*Whereas*, we shall miss his friendly greeting, his smiling face, his warm handclasp, his sympathetic understanding, his wise counsel and above all his efficient leadership: Therefore,

*Be it Resolved:*

1. That we the members of the Workers' Council of Edenton Street Sunday School, in love and grateful appreciation of the benediction which his life has been to this Church and community, reconsecrate our lives to the service of God, the Church, and the community, as his life was consecrated.

2. That we carry on with a new sense of loyalty and devotion the work that was so dear to his heart and for which he labored so wisely and well.

3. That we spread on our minutes a copy of these resolutions, that a copy be sent to the bereaved family, and that copies be sent to the *North Carolina Christian Advocate*, the *News & Observer*, and the *Raleigh Evening Times*.

VARA L. HERRING

BESSIE T. BROWN

MATTIE F. REESE

MRS. S. P. NORRIS

*Committee.*





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